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B'nai B'rith leaders see Pope and Franco

*From our Correspondent
Rome*

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Hopes that the Ecumenical Council's declaration on the Jews would be vigorously implemented and that its message would percolate down to parish level were expressed during a meeting with Pope Paul on Monday by Dr. William Wexler, the president of B'nai B'rith, and Mr. Saul Joffes, its general secretary.

The two men, who said that the Pope's attitude was "very co-operative," put forward a plea that the special *ad hoc* commission which was to be formed to give effect to the declaration should start work soon.

They came to Rome after a meeting in Vienna with the Austrian Chancellor, Dr. Josef Klaus, in the course of which they urged the introduction of legislation making antisemitism a crime against the State. They advocated improved methods of teaching democratic ideals in schools and the prepara-

tion of text-books which would deal adequately with the Nazi period.

They also asked the Chancellor to give consideration to a memorandum presented by the American Council for Equal Compensation in association with the World Association of Jewish Victims of Nazism from Austria which details Austria's negative attitude on many questions of restitution.

From Rome, Dr. Wexler and Mr. Joffes went to Madrid where they were meeting General Franco to discuss the implications for the Jewish community in the new law providing for a "legal shield" to guarantee religious liberty. They were also to discuss whether international organisations, such as B'nai B'rith, would be allowed to function in Spain.